

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

Sub A
B1

1. A reproducing apparatus which moves main data that has been subjected to reproduction-restrictive coding from a first recording medium where the main data is recorded to a second recording medium, comprising:

storing means for storing a key to be used for decoding a code that restricts reproduction of the main data;

input means for receiving the main data from the first recording medium;

judging means for judging whether the main data received by the input means can be decoded by using the key that is stored in the storing means;

output means for outputting the main data received by the input means to the second recording medium; and

control means for causing the output means to output the main data received by the input means to the second recording medium if the judging means judges that the main data can be decoded, and for prohibiting the output means from outputting the main data received by the input means to the second recording medium if judging means judges that the main data cannot be decoded.

2. The reproducing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising key generating means for generating a key for decoding the code that restricts reproduction of the main data, wherein the storing means stores the key generated by the

key generating means.

3. The reproducing apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the key that is generated by the key generating means and stored in the storing means is generated every time main data that has been subjected to reproduction-restrictive coding is moved from the first recording medium where the main data is recorded to the second recording medium, and is discarded every time movement of the main data completes.

4. The reproducing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the key that is stored in the storing means is unique to each apparatus and fixed.

5. The reproducing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising second output means for informing the first recording medium of permission or prohibition of movement of the main data and completion of the movement of the main data, wherein the control means causes the second output means to inform the first recording medium of permission of movement of the main data and thereby causes output of the main data if the judging means judges that the main data can be decoded, and causes the second output means to inform the first recording medium of completion of the movement and thereby causes erasure of the main data from the first recording medium when the movement of the main data has completed.

6. The reproducing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising reproducing means for reproducing the main

data that is input from the first recording medium, wherein the control means causes the reproducing means to reproduce the main data that is input from the first recording medium if the judging means judges that the main data can be decoded.

7. The reproducing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

second storing means for storing a second key that is different from the key to be used for decoding the main data that is input from the first recording medium; and

coding means for coding the main data to be output from the output means to the second recording medium in such a manner that resulting coded main data can be decoded by using the second key that is stored in the second storing means,

wherein the control means decodes the main data by using the key stored in the storing means, causes the coding means to encode the main data in such a manner that the main data can be decoded by using the second key stored in the second storing means, and causes the output means to output resulting coded main data to the second recording medium, if the judging means judges that the main data that is input from the first recording medium can be decoded.

8. The reproducing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising number-of-copying counting means for updating a count of the number of times of copying when the main data recorded in the second recording means is copied to the

first recording medium and when the main data is moved from the first recording medium.

~~9. The reproducing apparatus according to claim 8,~~
~~further comprising comparing means for comparing the count of the number-of-copying counting means with a permitted number of times of copying, wherein the control means prohibits copying when the number of copies of the main data copied from the second storing means has reached the number of copies that is permitted as a result of comparison by the comparing means.~~

10. An information distribution system comprising:
a server apparatus capable of being connected to a terminal apparatus, for supplying coded main data to the terminal apparatus, the server apparatus comprising:

memory means for recording one or a plurality of coded main data; and

transmitting means for transmitting, to the terminal apparatus, coded main data that is read out from the memory means; and

the terminal apparatus for decoding and reproducing coded main data, the terminal apparatus comprising:

receiving means for receiving the coded main data that is transmitted from the transmitting means of the server apparatus;

recording means for recording coded main data;

decoding means for decoding the coded main data

that is received by the receiving means or recorded in the recording means;

judging means for judging whether the terminal apparatus is connected to the server apparatus; and

control means for permitting the decoding means to decode the coded main data that is received by the receiving means when the judging means judges that the terminal apparatus is connected to the server apparatus, and for permitting the decoding means to decode the coded main data that is recorded in the recording means when the judging means judges that the terminal apparatus is not connected to the server apparatus.

11. The information distribution system according to claim 10, wherein the terminal apparatus further comprises coding means for coding main data, wherein the control means causes the coding means to encode main data and causes the server apparatus to record resulting coded main data.

12. The information distribution system according to claim 11, wherein the terminal apparatus further comprises attaching and detaching means for attaching the recording means to the terminal apparatus in a detachable manner.

~~Sub A37~~ 13. The information distribution system according to claim 11, wherein the terminal apparatus further comprises:

storing means for storing a key that is used when the coding means encodes the main data and when the decoding means decodes the coded main data,

wherein the coding means encodes the main data by using the key stored in the storing means, and the decoding means decodes the coded main data by using the key stored in the storing means.

14. The information distribution system according to claim 13, wherein the key that is stored in the storing means is unique to each apparatus.

15. The information distribution system according to claim 10, wherein the terminal apparatus further comprises reproducing means for reproducing decoded main data.

~~16. The information distribution system according to~~
~~claim 10, wherein:~~

the terminal apparatus further comprises transmitting means for transmitting decoded main data that is produced by the decoding means;

the server apparatus further comprises receiving means for receiving the decoded main data, and reproducing means for reproducing the decoded main data that is received by the receiving means,

whereby the server apparatus reproduces the main data that is decoded by the terminal apparatus.

17. The information distribution system according to claim 16, the decoded main data that is transmitted from the transmitting means of the terminal apparatus is an audio signal.

18. The information distribution system according to

claim 10, wherein the recording means of the terminal apparatus is a nonvolatile memory.

19. The information distribution system according to claim 10, wherein the memory medium of the server apparatus is a hard disk drive.